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Evaluating the Caregiver Burden Among Family Caregivers of Patients with Parkinson’s Disease in Isfahan

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Parkinson’s Disease (PD) is a disabling, progressive neurologic disease that gives rise to mobility and cognitive impairments among older adults. The disabling nature of PD demands continuous care of people affected and imposes a considerable burden on caregivers, who are mostly family members of patients. The resulting burden may cause psychological distress and physical problems in family caregivers. In turn, it may affect the capacity of family caregivers, reducing the quality of care. However, there is currently no study to quantify the caregiver burden among family caregivers of people with PD in Iranian settings. Although current data from non-Iranian sources are insightful, the situation in Iran may differ due to cultural factors affecting the perception of care and caregiving burden. This study aimed to describe the caregiver burden among family caregivers of people with PD in Iran.

Methods and Materials: The current study employed a cross-sectional design. The minimum sample size to ensure the confidence interval was 58. The family caregivers were selected from those registered in the Parkinson Charity Association of Isfahan, Iran, via convenience sampling according to eligibility criteria. Data were collected using the Zarit Burden Interview (ZBI). After giving informed consent, the caregivers were provided a questionnaire at the end of their weekly gatherings at the Parkinson Charity Association. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze data.

Results: We collected data from 60 family caregivers of patients with PD registered in the Parkinson Charity Association of Isfahan. The average age of participants was 45 ± 5 (mean ± SD), most of whom were the spouses of the patients with PD. The average ZBI score was 20 ± 9, implying a moderate caregiver burden. However, about half of caregivers had a ZBI score above 17, which is considered high according to some scorings of the instrument.

Conclusion and Discussion: Caregiving imposes a considerable burden on family caregivers of people with PD, making them vulnerable to psychological and physical stress. The current study indicates that family caregivers of patients with PD in Iran experience a greater caregiving burden compared to those in other countries for which data are available. More studies are needed for more conclusive information and to determine the underlying factors associated with caregiver burden in this population, an ongoing part of the study.

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